



DOT Employee Newsletter March 2002

From Dr. Jeff Runge, Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

In the wake of September 11th, we have seen our nation rally together as rarely seen before. We have seen our nation's response to the loss of innocent life in such a tragic, intolerable terrorist attack. Yet many Americans don't realize that there is another toll being exacted on our nation on a daily basis: needless death and injury from motor vehicle crashes. Motor vehicle crashes make up the lion's share of the transportation safety problems facing our nation. Despite major progress since federal safety programs were first enacted in the mid 1960's, traffic deaths are still tragically high.

Highway crashes account for 94 percent of the transportation-related deaths in our country, and 99 percent of the transportation-related injuries. Last year, traffic crashes killed nearly 42,000 people and injured another 3.1 million. They are the leading cause of death for children and adults, ages 6 to 33,

and represent nearly one-half of all traumatic deaths. The tragedy of highway traffic deaths is serious business for our country. Americans suffer this tragedy far more often than any other developed nation.

You must make a conscious effort to make sure that you and all of your passengers are buckled in with a seat belt or child seat, before the wheels roll, every time you get into a vehicle. There is simply no excuse not to buckle up. Do it for your health, and the well being of your family and your country.



Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program

Everyone's talking about it ... at least everyone over 40! A satellite broadcast is going to be held to explain this new program.

When: Wednesday, 3/6

Time: 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Location: Nassif Room 2230

Or you can watch it on your local TC-16 cable station.

For more detailed information, please visit OPM's website at www.OPM.gov/insure/ltc or you may contact your human resource office.

Federal Retirements Fall Short of Projections

Almost 20 percent fewer federal employees retired in fiscal 2001 than government officials had predicted, Office of Personnel Management statistics show.

The lower rates suggest that employees are waiting longer and longer to retire, a trend that has developed over the past decade or so. In 1988, 40 percent of federal employees retired as soon as they were eligible to do so. By 1997, only 21 percent of employees retired immediately, according to General Accounting Office figures. That trend has contributed to the aging of the federal workforce. Today there are more federal workers in their 60s than in their 20s.

--GovExec.com



**Don't let what you cannot
do interfere with what you
can.**

John Wooden

Please notify the center in advance if you need special accommodations for the **No Charge** programs listed below.



Career Connections Workshops

Interviewing – 3/8
KSA's – 3/11
"Crossroads" – 3/12
So You want to Be An Entrepreneur? – 3/20
Networking – 3/22
IDP – 3/25

Workshops will be held in PL-402. Space is limited. Call x69392 [TTY 67630] for the times and to register.



Worklife Programs

[Call x66389 or TTY 67630]

- New Moms Discussion Group – 3/13, 12-1, PL-402
- Adoption Seminar – 3/14, 12:30-1:30, PL-402
- Alzheimer's Seminar – 3/19, 12-1, PL-402
- Parenting Resource Fair – 3/26, 11:30-1:30, DOT Eatery
- Child Care Seminar – 3/28, 12:30-1:30, PL-402

Voluntary Contributions

The voluntary contributions program is another retirement savings program administered by OPM. The program shares some features with the Thrift Savings Plan. Earnings on the investments in both are tax-deferred until withdrawn. Both offer the option of withdrawing the money as a lump sum or using it to purchase an additional annuity at retirement. And the interest rate paid under the voluntary contributions program is comparable to the returns of TSP's G Fund.

But this program has several important restrictions:

- The program is available only to employees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS).
- In addition, CSRS employees who owe a deposit or redeposit for civilian service are ineligible to make voluntary contributions until the deposit or redeposit is paid.

Under the program, eligible employees may invest up to 10 percent of their career earnings, either by sending checks to or through direct deposit. The freedom to make a large investment at any time could make this program especially attractive to employees who have cashed in an investment, received an inheritance or otherwise come into some money that they would like to stash away.

To start a voluntary contributions account, pick up a Standard Form 2804 from your human resources office.

Work Number for Everyone

Is an automated employment/salary verification service that most of DOT is using. When you apply for an apartment lease, car loan, mortgage or other type of credit, your lender can contact the TALX *Work Number for Everyone*® to verify that you work at DOT, and to verify your salary. No one can access your salary information without your permission. You must provide your verifier several authorization codes if you want your salary information released.

Some employees have complained that their lenders have charged them a TALX service fee levied on the lender for not being a TALX member (nominal amount under \$10). TALX will reimburse any such fees. Fax any charge (e.g., phone bill, closing cost, etc.) with a brief note of explanation to TALX (Attn: The Work Number) at 314-214-7588.

For more information on the *Work Number for Everyone*®, click on "Employment/Salary Verification" on the TASC Human Resource Services' site: <http://www.tasc.dot.gov/hrm>



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